

States from India, Dr. Patel nevertheless retains his cultural and religious heritage. His luxurious home is designed, decorated, and furnished with authentic materials, art and other decor imported from India. Indeed his wedding celebration will include the traditional Garba and Raas ceremony.

Dr. Pravinchandra H. Patel is truly a man of achievement, service and public distinction and will certainly be complemented in his life and career going forward by his union with his new wife, June.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join my wife, Vivian and me, along with more than 730,000 citizens of the 2nd Congressional District of Georgia, in congratulating Dr. Pravinchandra H. Patel, MD and his new wife, June, on their marriage and continued service to their community. They are so deserving of this magical moment and a lifetime of happiness to follow. May love reign in their lives forever.

REMEMBERING ROMERO: GOD
PASSED THROUGH EL SALVADOR

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 8, 2016

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, in the Spring 2016 edition of *ReVista Magazine*, Gene Palumbo has written a beautiful remembrance of Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero, who was assassinated in 1980 and recently beatified in May 2015 in a moving ceremony that I was privileged to attend.

I have known Gene Palumbo for over three decades. He first began reporting on the war in El Salvador in 1980, when he moved to El Salvador to continue covering the civil war over the next twelve years. I remember speaking to him frequently when I traveled to El Salvador during those turbulent times, and I have always valued his insights and knowledge of the people, institutions and internal dynamics of that country. Gene has reported for the *New York Times*, *National Public Radio*, the *Canadian Broadcasting Company*, and most frequently, for the *National Catholic Reporter*. He teaches at the *Casa de la Solidaridad*, a semester-long study abroad program for U.S. university students in San Salvador.

Gene's reporting continues to inform and inspire me. This moving tribute to Archbishop Romero reflects the hope Gene continues to have in El Salvador's future. I urge all my colleagues to read and reflect on the life of the martyred and blessed Oscar Romero and the dedication of Gene Palumbo, who continues to write about the challenges facing the Salvadoran people.

REMEMBERING ROMERO: "GOD PASSED THROUGH
EL SALVADOR"

(By Gene Palumbo)

SAN SALVADOR.—Fr. Paul Schindler remembers the day when Oscar Romero sat beside him, trembling. Romero knew he wasn't among friends. The scene was a clergy meeting in early 1977, and many of the priests were furious: a man they'd clashed with—Romero—had just been named as the new archbishop.

As the meeting was ending, Romero—who hadn't yet been installed—was asked if he'd like to say a few words. For all Schindler knew, they would be the last words he'd ever

hear from Romero. Discouraged at the prospect of working under someone he was unsure of, Schindler had told his bishop back in Cleveland that he'd decided to return home after eight years of parish work in El Salvador.

"He walked to the front of the room and began to speak," said Schindler, "and after a half hour, I said to myself, 'I'm not going anywhere.'"

It was Schindler's first glimpse of something that, until then, had been unknown to him and many others: Romero had begun to change. Earlier, in his years as an auxiliary bishop in San Salvador, many had regarded him as too docile, too accepting of a social order which, they felt, cried out for change. Then, in 1974, he was named bishop of Santiago de Maria, a rural diocese where government repression was widespread, and where, while Romero was bishop, the first massacres of peasants took place. His three years there affected him deeply.

Those were the years when Eva Menjivar came to know him. She was one of many nuns who, in the 1960s, left their convents in San Salvador and went to work in rural parishes that had no priests.

She was assigned to Ciudad Barrios, the small town in eastern El Salvador where Romero was born and grew up. The town was located in the Santiago de Maria diocese, and by the time Romero was named bishop there, Menjivar and her fellow sisters had catechetical and literacy programs underway, and were offering job training in sewing and auto mechanics.

Menjivar says that when people invited Romero to visit their far-flung hamlets, he almost always accepted. She recalls an occasion when residents of one of those hamlets staged a play for him, a play they had written about several Gospel parables. Afterward, they spoke about what the parables meant to them.

At the end they turned to Romero and—as one might ask an expert—said, tell us what these parables really mean. His reply, Menjivar recalls, was, "I have nothing to add. I've learned more about the Bible today than I did when I studied it in the seminary in Rome."

"We had never seen a bishop draw near to the people the way he did," says Menjivar. "He'd greet them all, try to speak with them all, and when they had questions for him, he was happy to try to answer them."

Schindler's experience was similar. "Whenever I'd invite him—and not just to the main church, but to the rural villages—he would come. He was always there with the people. That was his whole thing: to walk with them, to feel with them, to inspire them."

Menjivar recalls the sisters' monthly retreats with Romero, and the time in late 1976 when, informed that the National Guard had arrested two teenage catechists in Ciudad Barrios, he went there immediately to demand their release. To ensure that they wouldn't be re-arrested, he took them back to Santiago de Maria where he listened to their accounts of being tortured.

Menjivar was later transferred to a parish near the town of Aguilaes. There she worked with Jesuit Fr. Rutilio Grande, whose sainthood process is now underway. On the evening of March 12, 1977, she was at Mass when she was handed a note saying that Grande had disappeared. She went straight to Aguilaes and, upon arriving, learned that he had been murdered along with an elderly campesino and a teenager.

Grande and Romero had become close friends in the late 1960s, when both were living at the seminary in San Salvador. When Romero was named bishop in 1970, he asked Grande to preside at his installation ceremony.

In the following four years—up until the time he left for Santiago de Maria—Romero had bitter disputes with priests in the archdiocese, and when, to their dismay, he was named archbishop in 1977, it was Grande who stood up for him.

"Rutilio said to us, 'Yes, he's conservative. But he's honest, and he's someone you can work with,'" said Fr. Pedro Declercq, a Belgian missionary whose work with grass-roots Christian communities led to the bombing of his parish.

Declercq didn't have to wait long to see how much Romero had changed. They'd had an ugly falling out in 1972, when his parishioners invited Romero to visit them to say Mass and explain why he had justified, on behalf of the bishops conference, a military invasion of the National University.

The army had wounded some people, arrested others, and evicted people whose homes were on the university's campus. The discussion between Romero and the parishioners began at the homily, but quickly turned into a shouting match, with Declercq finally tearing off his vestments and saying the Mass was over.

When Romero returned to San Salvador as archbishop, he visited the parish again. As recounted by Sister Noemi Ortiz in Maria López Vigil's *Monseñor Romero: Memories in Mosaic*,

[Romero] brought up [the earlier incident] as soon as he got there. "We couldn't even celebrate the Eucharist that afternoon . . . We were insulting each other. . . . Do you remember? I remember it well and today, as your pastor, I want to say that I now understand what happened that day, and here before you I recognize my error."

"I was wrong and you were right. That day you taught me about faith and about the Church. Please forgive me for everything that happened then."

Well, all of us, young and old, started crying . . . We broke into applause, and our applause melted into the music of the party. . . . All was forgiven.

On the night of Grande's death, Menjivar was sitting beside his corpse, using a towel to absorb the blood that was trickling out, when Romero arrived at the parish. She said Romero approached the corpse and, after standing in silence for several moments, said, "If we don't change now, we never will."

Jesuit Fr. Jon Sobrino, a prominent liberation theologian, was at the parish that night, and answered the door when Romero knocked. Earlier Romero had criticized Sobrino's writings on Christology; later, as archbishop, he would consult Sobrino when preparing his pastoral letters.

Sobrino says that after Romero himself was murdered, "people began speaking of him as an exceptional person and Christian. In the funeral Mass we held for him at the UCA (Central American University), Ignacio Ellacuría said, 'In Archbishop Romero, God passed through El Salvador' The people spontaneously proclaimed him a saint" (In 1989, Fr. Ellacuría, along with five other Jesuits and two women, was murdered at the UCA.)

When Pope Francis ratified Romero's status as a martyr, Schindler said, "The people in the parish have been waiting and waiting for this. They hold him as a saint, and they've always held him as a saint, and now that the pronouncement has been made, they're going to be overwhelmed."

Menjivar said that when she heard the news, "I felt great joy—and at the same time, I thought to myself, I hope this will be the occasion for those who killed him to be converted."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 8, 2016

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, on July 7, 2016, my vote on roll call 394 was recorded as "nay" due to an inadvertent error. I intended to vote "yea" on roll call vote 394.

IN OPPOSITION TO RULE ON MOTION TO GO TO CONFERENCE ON S. 2943, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017 AND CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 524, COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2016

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 8, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Rule for this very important reason.

I oppose the rule because we should instead be devoting our time, attention, and energy to passing legislation to address the epidemic of gun violence and keeps the most dangerous weapons out of the hands of the most dangerous persons and potential terrorists.

Mr. Speaker, we should instead be debating and voting on "No Fly, No Buy" legislation to keep guns out of the hands of suspected terrorists and H.R. 1217, the "Public Safety & Second Amendment Rights Protection Act of 2015," sponsored by Congressman PETER KING of New York and Congressman MIKE THOMPSON of California, which expands and strengthens the firearms transfer background check system.

Less than a month ago, on June 12, our nation was horrified and heartbroken by the heinous act of terror and hatred that claimed the lives of 49 innocent persons and wounded many more in Orlando, Florida, the deadliest mass shooting in the history of our country.

Our hearts still grieve over a loss so overwhelming and senseless.

Mass shootings have become too common in our country and we owe it to the victims of gun violence—from Orlando to Charleston to Aurora to Chattanooga to Fort Hood and more—to keep weapons intended for military use out of the hands of persons who would use them to massacre civilians.

Mr. Speaker, the statistics are grim.

In 2015, 13,286 people were killed in the United States by firearms and 26,819 people were injured;

In 2015 there were 372 mass shootings in the United States, including 64 school shootings at elementary and secondary schools;

More than 700 children have lost their lives to gun violence in the first 160 days of 2015;

On average, 7 children and adolescents lose their lives to gun violence each day, 75 percent of which are under the age of 12 years old;

So many people die annually from gun violence in the United States that the death toll between 1968 and 2011 eclipses the total

lives lost in all the armed conflicts in the history of the United States;

Mr. Speaker, let me briefly recount some of the gun violence carnage that claimed the lives of more than 300,000 persons during the period 2005–2015:

1. On June 7, 2015, a gunman shot and killed nine people at the Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, one of the oldest and largest black congregations in the South;

2. On November 11, 2009, at Fort Hood, near Killeen, Texas, a gunman shot and killed 13 people, and wounded 30 others;

3. On August 5, 2012 in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, a gunman shot and killed six people, and injured three others, at the Sikh Temple of Oak Creek;

4. On July 7, 2015 in Chattanooga, Tennessee a gunman shot and killed five people, including two U.S. Marines and a Naval Officer, and shot and injured two others at a recruiting center and U.S. Naval Reserve Center;

5. On December 2, 2015 in San Bernardino, California, two gunmen killed 14 people and injured 21 others at the Inland Regional Center;

6. On December 14, 2012, a gunman murdered 26 persons, including 20 children and 6 school administrators and teachers, at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, Connecticut;

7. On April 16, 2007, a gunman killed 32 persons and injured 17 others at Virginia Tech University in Blacksburg, Virginia; and

8. On August 8, 2015, a gunman brutally murdered his ex-girlfriend and her six children and husband in one of the most notorious cases of domestic violence in the history of Houston, Texas;

Nearly 100 metropolitan areas have experienced mass shootings like these since 2013.

Mass shootings occur more frequently in states that do not require background checks for all gun sales and analyses of mass shootings in the United States between 2009 and 2015 document that the majority of mass shootings occur in venues where the carrying of firearms is not restricted.

In states that require background checks for all handgun sales, including guns offered in unlicensed sales online and at gun shows, there are 52 percent fewer mass shootings.

Congress has observed 25 moments of silence honoring victims of mass shootings since the December 14, 2012 massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, but has not enacted or even brought up for debate and vote a single gun violence prevention measure.

That is why I have introduced H.R. 5470, the "Stop Mass Killings by Violent Terrorists Act," which will prohibit a firearms dealer from transferring a semiautomatic assault weapon or large capacity ammunition clips to a purchaser until the Attorney General has verified that the prospective transferee has truthfully answered new questions on the firearms background check questionnaire regarding contacts between the prospective purchaser or transferee and federal law enforcement authorities.

H.R. 5470 complements many of the gun violence prevention and anti-terrorism bills I have introduced in this and previous Congresses, including the "No Fly For Foreign Fighters Act" (H.R. 4240), which passed the House earlier this year and is pending in the Senate.

I am pleased that Republican Senator SUSAN COLLINS, along with her colleagues Senator LINDSAY GRAHAM and others, have introduced bipartisan legislation this week that will ban the sale of guns to anyone who appears on the government's No-Fly list, or the selectee list, a list which includes names of people who require additional security at airports.

Clearly, if you're too dangerous to get on a plane, you're too dangerous to buy a gun.

On average gun violence claims the lives of 90 persons each day. Since 1968, more than a million persons have died at the hand of a gun.

The homicide rate in the United States is about 6.9 times higher than the combined rate in 22 other populous highly-developed countries, despite similar non-lethal crime and violence rates.

Mr. Speaker, we can reduce the incidence of mass shootings like the ones that occurred in San Bernardino, Newtown, and Orlando by making it more difficult for those who would do our people and communities harm to obtain automatic assault weapons and high capacity ammunition magazines more difficult, or better yet, by banning them altogether.

And a good place to start is for the House to reject this Rule and bring to the floor for debate and vote H.R. 1217, the Public Safety & Second Amendment Rights Protection Act of 2015," and the bill I have introduced with Congresswoman CORINE BROWN, whose congressional district includes Orlando's Pulse Nightclub, H.R. 5470, the "Stop Mass Killings by Violent Terrorists Act."

TRIBUTE TO THE 2016 PANORAMA
HIGH SCHOOL BOYS GOLF TEAM

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 8, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Panorama Boys Golf Team for winning for the 2016 Iowa Boys 2A State Golf Tournament.

I would like to congratulate each member of the Team:

Players: Reid Cobb, Aaron Kling, Will Babcock, George Appleseth, Max Monthei and Adam Hackfort Coaches: Hal Rossow and Dave Van Ahn

Mr. Speaker, the example set by these students and their coaches demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent them in the United States Congress. I know all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating these young men for competing in this rigorous competition and wishing them all continued success.

RECOGNIZING THE EXPANSION OF
THE FRESNO COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 8, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the grand opening of the Fresno